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**FUNCTIONAL FEATURES OF THE PRESCHOOL
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WITH AN ETHNOCULTURAL**

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Abstract

This article considers the specificities of the ranking mechanics as an instrument, which enables one to proceed with assessing the quality of education in a preschool educational institution by comparing its inherent characteristics with analogous characteristics of other kindergartens. Subjects are state-owned municipal preschool educational institutions, including institutions with an ethnocultural component of education, aimed at child-rearing for tolerance and respect of cultures, instilling universal cultural values, introduction to various cultural traditions. All the information due for assessment is grouped in three areas: favorable environment for the child in the preschool educational institution, professional qualifications of the teachers working with children, and additional services provided by a kindergarten. With the assistance of the ranking, one can determine the most sought-after complex and partial educational programs used by preschool educational institutions for the development of their own core educational program, one can to identify regional and ethnocultural preferences of different Russian Federation regions in choosing the content for the implementation in the preschool educational institution. The results of the preschool education institutions' ranking are provided in a form of flexible database that can be searched for any information in demand. Functioning features of the preschool educational institutions with an ethnocultural component are considered separately.

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Keywords: Preschool educational institution (kindergarten), ranking, staffing of a kindergarten, favorable environment for a child's stay in the kindergarten, additional services in the kindergarten, informational accessibility of kindergartens.

1. Introduction

For the fourth year in a row a study on the topic of ranking state-owned (municipal) preschool educational organizations of Russian Federation is carried out. This study is a collaborative project of RIA Novosti and the Institute of Study of Childhood, Family and Education of Russian Academy of Education, in which the regional educational governments of Russian Federation regions also take part.

Ranking is a form of providing the results of evaluating the activities of educational institutions or systems, in which the participants of the ranking are placed in a certain sequence depending on the marks obtained from various indicators of their activities (IREG, 2016). The quality preschool education is a complex indicator integrating the initial stages of the formation of the personality, the conditions of the educational process and the degree of compliance achieved educational results of regulatory requirements, social and personal expectations (Bolotov & Efremova, 2005). Based on the ranking procedure it serves as an effective tool for obtaining the information for comparison and better understanding of the current situation in education..

2. Problem Statement

In a broad sense of the objective of this ranking is to attract the attention of general public to the problem of informational accessibility of kindergartens, to stimulate a public discussion on the issue of assessing the quality and availability of the preschool education and informational support for endorsement of best practices on this area.

3. Research Questions

More specific objectives are ensuring the reliable information on the key aspects of the quality of the preschool educational services, provided by kindergartens; providing the heads of preschool educational institutions with opportunities to detect the strengths and weaknesses of an institution by comparing it with other institutions; providing the persons concerned with accurate assessment of the institutions.

4. Purpose of the Study

As criteria to base the ranking on, it was proposed to use 55 main indicators of the basic areas of preschool educational institutions' work, grouped in three directions: 1) favorable environment provided for the child in the preschool educational institution; 2) professional characteristics of the pedagogical staff working with children; 3) additional services provided for a kindergarten student. These directions correlate with the scales of the ECERS-R (Wright, 2010). In addition to that the ranking is also consists of context information about each educational institution, which enables one to identify the specifics of each rated entity. Thus, with the assistance of the ranking, one can determine the most sought-after complex and partial educational programs used by preschool educational institutions for the development of their own core educational program; to identify regional and ethnocultural preferences of different Russian Federation regions in choosing the content for the implementation in the preschool educational institution;

to obtain detailed comprehensive information about any preschool educational institution involved in the research.

5. Research Methods

The results of the preschool education institutions' ranking are provided not only as a single consolidated rating on the basis of an integrated assessment, but also in a form of data base. In accordance with the principles of ranking in education in Russian Federation (Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, 2014), a ranking list is a form of presentation of the evaluation results for educational institutions, within which the involved preschool educational institutions can be sorted out on the basis of all or any of the employed indicators. In contrast to the rating form, it is not a fixed database, but rather a flexible database that can be searched for any information in demand: the original list of rankings can be re-assorted to suit the aim of each particular search. The general public has an access to the information both on the ranking of all preschool educational institutions in the three major areas of rating, and on the ranking of the kindergartens in each of the regions of the Russian Federation involved in the study. This form of results presentation ensures that the interests of the target audience searching for all types of information are taken into consideration.

The target audience comprises the following major groups: parents of preschool age children, heads of preschool educational institutions, educators interested in obtaining objective information to make effective management decisions in the field of preschool education.

The value of the composite index that forms the basis of the rating is calculated as a weighted total of marks in the key areas. In general, the rating calculation is conducted according to the specifically designed formula described in detail in "Procedure of rating the state-owned preschool educational institutions", which is presented on the official website of the International News Agency "Russia Today" (Social Browser, 2017) and is available to the general public.

Over the period of 4 years of the study being carried out the interest of the general publics grows, as the interest from educational institutions – in the first year of the study 1974 preschool educational institutions from eight regions of Russian Federation took part in it, whereas in 2015 7182 preschool educational institutions from twenty-four regions of Russian Federation participated in it (in more detail statistics are displayed in fig. 1 and 2). It is important to note that the decision about participation in the study all the kindergartens make on purely voluntary basis.

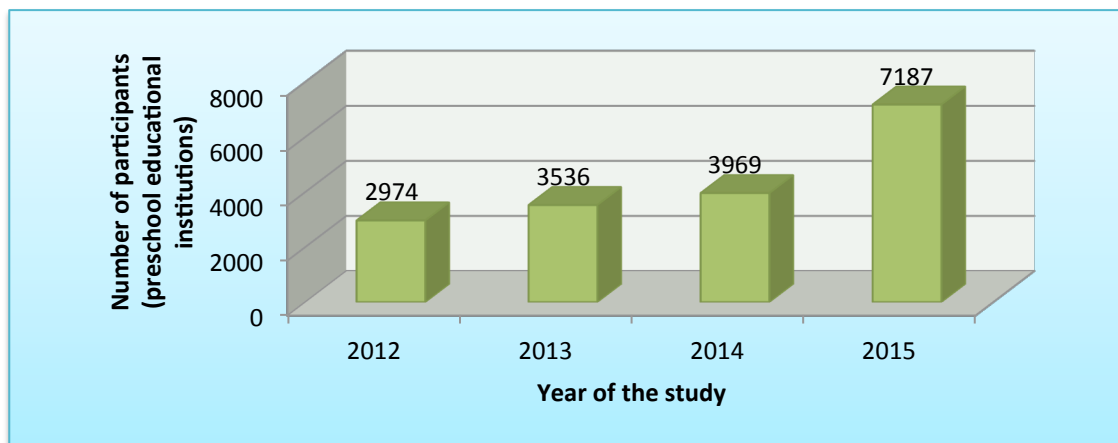


Figure 1. Total number of preschool educational institutions participated in the study

Rating subjects are state-owned municipal preschool educational institutions, including institutions with an ethnocultural component of education, aimed at child-rearing for tolerance and respect of cultures, instilling universal cultural values, introduction to various cultural traditions. In ethnocultural organizations children are given creative foundations of folk culture, rejecting national exclusiveness and instilling human values of mutual respect, tolerance and humanity. Overall by the study of 2015 were covered 143 (2% from total sample) preschool educational institutions of ethnocultural character.

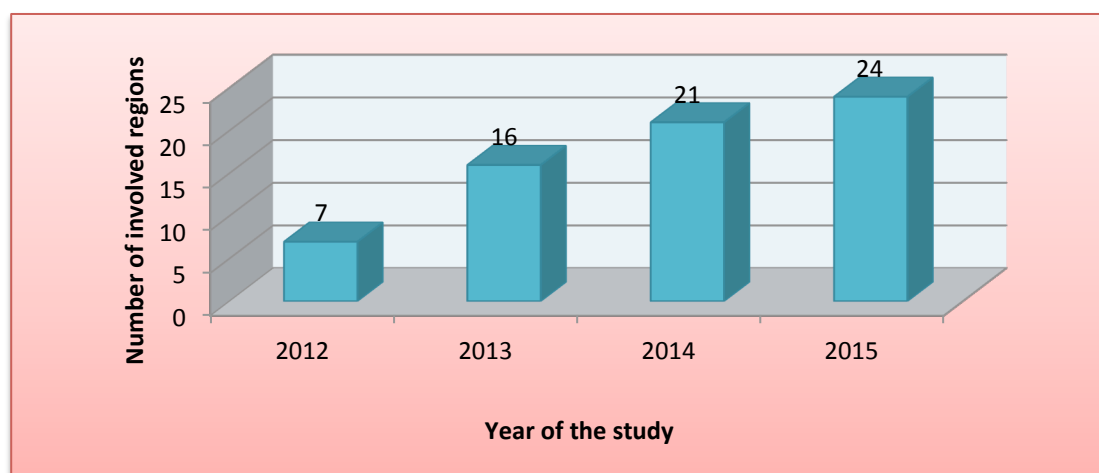


Figure 2. Total number of Russian Federation regions included in the study

6. Findings

The results of the 2015 study showed that the average fill rate of the kindergartens with an ethnocultural component is lower than that of regular type – on average 133 children attend them, whereas the average number of children attending regular kindergartens is 160. Most likely, the given fact is explained by rather specific direction of a preschool educational institution. An average number of staff in a preschool educational institution with an ethnocultural component is also lower than in that of regular type: 30 employees versus 38 accordingly.

The position in the rating of the Russian preschool educational institutions is characterized by a mark (from the total of 4 marks); they are determined by the level of development of the relevant quality features. Each level corresponds to the assessment scale determining the degree of identity between the quality indicators of a particular kindergarten and the corresponding rating criteria. The compliance of the kindergarten performance rating criteria at the level of 25% or less is marked as "unsatisfactory", the compliance within the range of 25% - 50% is marked as "satisfactory". The "good" mark is conferred to the kindergartens with the compliance figures of 50% - 75% and the "excellent" mark is conferred to the kindergartens with the compliance rate of 75% and above. Final Results of the Rating of Municipal Kindergartens (Russia, 2015) are presented in table 1.

Within the described above rating system, the better part of the assessed preschool educational institutions (over 90%) correspond to the "satisfactory" mark. The number of such preschool educational institutions is relatively stable in each of the years of the undertaken study and is subject to only insignificant fluctuations. The second largest part of the assessed preschool educational institutions corresponds to "good" mark and the third (and relatively small) part is evaluated as "unsatisfactory". The undertaken study failed to rank any kindergartens as "excellent" and, hence, corresponding to the compliance level of 75% and above.

Kindergartens with an ethnocultural component of education in general mass (97%) received the "satisfactory" mark and only 1,5% of preschool educational institutions received the "good" and "unsatisfactory" marks.

When evaluating the preschool educational institutions in each area, including key performance indicators, the following conclusions can be drawn.

Table 01. Final Results of the Rating of Municipal Kindergartens (Russia, 2015)

| Type of rating | Number of kindergartens | Assessment mark | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| | | "excellent" (position in the rating 75%-100%) | "good" (position in the rating 50%-75%) | "satisfactory" (position in the rating 25%-50%) | "unsatisfactory" (position in the rating 0%-25%) |
| TOTAL | 7187 | 0 | 160 KND (2,2%) | 6988 KND (97,2%) | 39 KND (0,6%) |
| Amur Region | 218 | 0 | 1 KND (0,5%) | 213 KND (97,7%) | 4 KND (1,8%) |
| Astrakhan Region | 232 | 0 | 0 | 228 KND (98,3%) | 4 KND (1,7%) |
| Belgorod Region | 101 | 0 | 5 KND (5%) | 96 KND (95%) | 0 |
| Bryansk Region | 78 | 0 | 0 | 78 KND (100%) | 0 |
| Volgograd Region | 188 | 0 | 9 KND (4,8%) | 179 KND (95,2%) | 0 |
| Jewish Autonomous Region | 61 | 0 | 0 | 60 KND (98,4%) | 1 KND (1,6%) |
| Kirov Region | 477 | 0 | 3 KND (0,6%) | 474 KND (99,4%) | 0 |
| Krasnodar territory | 1185 | 0 | 4 KND (0,3%) | 1180 KND (99,6%) | 1 KND (0,1%) |
| Krasnoyarsk | 393 | 0 | 28 KND | 363 KND | 2 KND |

| Region | | | (7,1%) | (92,4%) | (0,5%) |
|------------------------------|-----|---|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Novosibirsk Territory | 666 | 0 | 18 KND (2,7%) | 645 KND (96,8%) | 3 KND (0,5%) |
| Republic of Bashkortostan | 113 | 0 | 4 KND (3,5%) | 109 KND (96,5%) | 0 |
| Republic of Mari El | 241 | 0 | 1 KND (0,4%) | 238 KND (98,8%) | 2 KND (0,8%) |
| Republic of North Ossetia | 152 | 0 | 0 | 146 KND (96,1%) | 6 KND (3,9%) |
| Republic of Tatarstan | 458 | 0 | 19 KND (4,1%) | 436 KND (95,2%) | 3 KND (0,7%) |
| Ryazan Region | 64 | 0 | 2 KND (3,1%) | 61 KND (95,3%) | 1 KND (1,6%) |
| Samara Region | 500 | 0 | 20 KND (4%) | 480 KND (96%) | 0 |
| Saratov Region | 915 | 0 | 4 KND (0,4%) | 903 KND (98,7%) | 8 KND (0,9%) |
| Stavropol Territory | 95 | 0 | 0 | 95 KND (100%) | 0 |
| Tambov Region | 211 | 0 | 0 | 211 KND (100%) | 0 |
| Tver Region | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 KND (100%) | 0 |
| Ulyanovsk Region | 47 | 0 | 1 KND (7,7%) | 46 KND (92,3%) | 0 |
| Khabarovsk Territory | 385 | 0 | 0 | 381 KND (99%) | 4 KND (1%) |
| Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area | 371 | 0 | 41 KND (7,7%) | 330 KND (92,3%) | 0 |
| Chuvash Republic | 34 | 0 | 0 | 34 KND (100%) | 0 |

The area of work “favorable environment at a preschool educational institution facilitating the development of a child” can be roughly subdivided into two groups: the kindergartens with the rating mark "satisfactory" and kindergartens with the rating mark "good". The ratio between them is approximately 60% to 40%, respectively, with the proportion of the first group slowly increasing year by year. Several preschool educational institutions can be assessed as "unsatisfactory" and no kindergartens have deserved an "excellent" mark in terms of favorable conditions facilitating the development of children. The results of the ranking of the kindergartens in the area of "favorable conditions facilitating the development of children" are presented in the table 2.

Table 02. Ranking for favourable conditions facilitating the development of children

| Type of rating | Number of kindergartens | Assessment mark | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | | “excellent” (position in the rating 75%-100%) | “good” (position in the rating 50%-75%) | “satisfactory” (position in the rating 25%-50%) | “unsatisfactory” (position in the rating 0%-25%) |
| TOTAL | 7187 | 0 | 2759 KND (34,4%) | 4425 KND (61,6%) | 3 KND (0,04%) |
| Amur Region | 218 | 0 | 58 KND (26,6%) | 160 KND (73,4%) | 0 |
| Astrakhan Region | 232 | 0 | 44 KND (19%) | 188 KND (81%) | 0 |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------|---|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Belgorod Region | 101 | 0 | 40 KND (39,6%) | 61 KND (60,4%) | 0 |
| Bryansk Region | 78 | 0 | 19 KND (24,4%) | 59 KND (75,6%) | 0 |
| Volgograd Region | 188 | 0 | 96 KND (51,1%) | 92 KND (48,9%) | 0 |
| Jewish Autonomous Region | 61 | 0 | 8 KND (1,7%) | 53 KND (98,4%) | 0 |
| Kirov Region | 477 | 0 | 151 KND (31,7%) | 326 KND (68,3%) | 0 |
| Krasnodar territory | 1185 | 0 | 574 KND (48,4%) | 611 KND (51,6%) | 0 |
| Krasnoyarsk Region | 393 | 0 | 139 KND (35,4%) | 253 KND (64,4%) | 1 KND (0,2%) |
| Novosibirsk Territory | 666 | 0 | 261 KND (39,2%) | 405 KND (60,8%) | 0 |
| Republic of Bashkortastan | 113 | 0 | 38 KND (33,6%) | 75 KND (66,4%) | 0 |
| Republic of Mari El | 241 | 0 | 79 KND (32,8%) | 161 KND (66,8%) | 1 KND (0,4%) |
| Republic of North Ossetia | 152 | 0 | 9 KND (5,9%) | 143 KND (94,1%) | 0 |
| Republic of Tatarstan | 458 | 0 | 205 KND (44,8%) | 252 KND (55%) | 1 KND (0,2%) |
| Ryazan Region | 64 | 0 | 19 KND (29,7%) | 45 KND (70,3%) | 0 |
| Samara Region | 500 | 0 | 314 KND (62,8%) | 186 KND (37,2%) | 0 |
| Saratov Region | 915 | 0 | 174 KND (19%) | 741 KND (81%) | 0 |
| Stavropol Territory | 95 | 0 | 38 KND (40%) | 57 KND (60%) | 0 |
| Tambov Region | 211 | 0 | 84 KND (39,8%) | 127 KND (60,2%) | 0 |
| Tver Region | 2 | 0 | 1 KND (50%) | 1 KND (50%) | 0 |
| Ulyanovsk Region | 47 | 0 | 13 KND (27,7%) | 34 KND (72,3%) | 0 |
| Khabarovsk Territory | 385 | 0 | 107 KND (27,8%) | 278 KND (72,2%) | 0 |
| Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area | 371 | 0 | 260 KND (70,1%) | 111 KND (29,9%) | 0 |
| Chuvash Republic | 34 | 0 | 28 KND (82,3%) | 6 KND (17,7%) | 0 |

In kindergartens with an ethnocultural component of education the number of organizations, created "satisfactory" conditions for the children is higher – 67%. In 32% of preschool educational institutions are created "good" conditions for the students and 1% of preschool educational institutions – "unsatisfactory".

The area of work "professional qualifications of teachers working with children" is a reason for concern: the bulk of the Russian preschool educational institutions falls into two groups with the ratio of about 70% to 30%. The first group corresponds to the assessment mark of "satisfactory" while the second group comprises kindergartens assessed as "unsatisfactory".

These figures reveal the urgent "human resources" problem in the current system of preschool education in the Russian Federation. The essence of the problem is that kindergarten officials face difficulties in recruiting the qualified staff because job positions at preschool educational institutions do not appeal to potential employees either in terms of social or of financial security. The results of the ranking of this area are presented in table 3.

Table 03. Ranking of professional qualifications of teachers working with children

| Type of rating | Number of kindergartens | Assessment mark | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| | | "excellent" (position in the rating 75%-100%) | "good" (position in the rating 50%-75%) | "satisfactory" (position in the rating 25%-50%) | "unsatisfactory" (position in the rating 0%-25%) |
| TOTAL | 7187 | 0 | 26 KND (0,4%) | 5196 KND (72,3%) | 1965 KND (27,3%) |
| Amur Region | 218 | 0 | 0 | 153 KND (70,2%) | 65 KND (29,8%) |
| Astrakhan Region | 232 | 0 | 0 | 140 KND (60,3%) | 92 KND (39,7%) |
| Belgorod Region | 101 | 0 | 0 | 92 KND (91,1%) | 9 KND (8,9%) |
| Belgorod Region | 78 | 0 | 0 | 61 KND (78,2%) | 17 KND (21,8%) |
| Volgograd Region | 188 | 0 | 0 | 161 KND (85,6%) | 27 KND (14,4%) |
| Jewish Autonomous Region | 61 | 0 | 0 | 36 KND (59%) | 25 KND (41%) |
| Kirov Region | 477 | 0 | 2 KND (0,4%) | 377 KND (79%) | 98 KND (20,6%) |
| Krasnodar territory | 1185 | 0 | 2 KND (0,2%) | 735 KND (62%) | 448 KND (37,8%) |
| Krasnoyarsk Region | 393 | 0 | 3 KND (0,7%) | 330 KND (84%) | 60 KND (15,3%) |
| Novosibirsk Territory | 666 | 0 | 2 KND (0,3%) | 512 KND (76,9%) | 152 KND (22,8%) |
| Republic of Bashkortastan | 113 | 0 | 2 KND (1,8%) | 107 KND (94,7%) | 4 KND (3,5%) |
| Republic of Mari El | 241 | 0 | 0 | 179 KND (98,8%) | 62 KND (0,8%) |
| Republic of North Ossetia | 152 | 0 | 0 | 61 KND (40,1%) | 91 KND (59,9%) |
| Republic of Tatarstan | 458 | 0 | 2 KND (0,4%) | 362 KND (79,1%) | 94 KND (20,5%) |
| Ryazan Region | 64 | 0 | 0 | 51 KND (79,7%) | 13 KND (20,3%) |
| Samara Region | 500 | 0 | 1 KND (0,2%) | 427 KND (85,4%) | 72 KND (14,4%) |
| Saratov Region | 915 | 0 | 0 | 578 KND (63,2%) | 337 KND (36,8%) |
| Stavropol Territory | 95 | 0 | 0 | 81 KND (85,3%) | 14 KND (14,7%) |
| Tambov Region | 211 | 0 | 0 | 145 KND (68,7%) | 66 KND (31,3%) |
| Tver Region | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 KND (100%) | 0 |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|---|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Ulyanovsk Region | 47 | 0 | 0 | 37 KND (78,7%) | 10 KND (21,3%) |
| Khabarovsk Territory | 385 | 0 | 0 | 221 KND (57,4%) | 164 KND (42,6%) |
| Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area | 371 | 0 | 12 KND (3,2%) | 315 KND (84,9%) | 44 KND (11,9%) |
| Chuvash Republic | 34 | 0 | 0 | 33 KND (97,1%) | 1 KND (2,9%) |

The area of work "extra services provided by a kindergarten" comprises the better part (about 65%) of the kindergartens assessed as "satisfactory". About a quarter of all the kindergartens are assessed as "unsatisfactory" and a mere 10% of the total number of kindergartens comply with the requirements for the "good" mark. The results of the ranking of the kindergartens in the area of "extra services provided by a kindergarten" are presented in table 4.

Table 04. Ranking of extra services provided by a kindergarten

| Type of rating | Number of kindergartens | Assessment mark | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| | | "excellent" (position in the rating 75%-100%) | "good" (position in the rating 50%-75%) | "satisfactory" (position in the rating 25%-50%) | "unsatisfactory" (position in the rating 0%-25%) |
| TOTAL | 7187 | 2 KND (0,03%) | 628 KND (8,7%) | 4703 KND (65,5%) | 1854 KND (25,8%) |
| Amur Region | 218 | 0 | 8 KND (3,7%) | 130 KND (59,6%) | 80 KND (36,7%) |
| Astrakhan Region | 232 | 0 | 1 KND (0,4%) | 121 KND (52,2%) | 110 KND (47,4%) |
| Belgorod Region | 101 | 0 | 10 KND (9,9%) | 62 KND (61,4%) | 29 KND (28,7%) |
| Belgorod Region | 78 | 0 | 4 KND (5,1%) | 53 KND (68%) | 21 KND (26,9%) |
| Volgograd Region | 188 | 0 | 102 KND (54,2%) | 74 KND (39,4%) | 12 KND (6,4%) |
| Jewish Autonomous Region | 61 | 0 | 1 KND (1,6%) | 38 KND (62,3%) | 22 KND (36,1%) |
| Kirov Region | 477 | 0 | 22 KND (4,6%) | 292 KND (61,2%) | 163 KND (34,2%) |
| Krasnodar territory | 1185 | 0 | 13 KND (1,1%) | 671 KND (56,6%) | 501 KND (42,3%) |
| Krasnoyarsk Region | 393 | 1 KND (0,3%) | 69 KND (17,6%) | 276 KND (70,2%) | 47 KND (11,9%) |
| Novosibirsk Territory | 666 | 0 | 59 KND (8,9%) | 463 KND (69,5%) | 144 KND (21,6%) |
| Republic of Bashkortostan | 113 | 0 | 8 KND (7,1%) | 72 KND (63,7%) | 33 KND (29,2%) |
| Republic of Mari El | 241 | 0 | 14 KND (5,8%) | 167 KND (69,3%) | 60 KND (24,9%) |
| Republic of North Ossetia | 152 | 0 | 4 KND (2,6%) | 94 KND (61,8%) | 54 KND (35,6%) |
| Republic of Tatarstan | 458 | 0 | 35 KND (7,6%) | 327 KND (71,4%) | 96 KND (21%) |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Ryazan Region | 64 | 0 | 10 KND (15,6%) | 37 KND (57,8%) | 17 KND (26,6%) |
| Samara Region | 500 | 1 KND (0,2%) | 67 KND (13,4%) | 425 KND (85%) | 7 KND (1,4%) |
| Saratov Region | 915 | 0 | 64 KND (7%) | 626 KND (68,4%) | 225 KND (24,6%) |
| Stavropol Territory | 95 | 0 | 2 KND (2,1%) | 83 KND (87,4%) | 10 KND (10,5%) |
| Tambov Region | 211 | 0 | 10 KND (4,7%) | 149 KND (70,6%) | 52 KND (24,7%) |
| Tver Region | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 KND (100%) | 0 |
| Ulyanovsk Region | 47 | 0 | 2 KND (4,2%) | 24 KND (51,1%) | 21 KND (44,7%) |
| Khabarovsk Territory | 385 | 0 | 25 KND (6,5%) | 232 KND (60,3%) | 128 KND (33,2%) |
| Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area | 371 | 0 | 96 KND (25,9%) | 258 KND (69,5%) | 17 KND (4,6%) |
| Chuvash Republic | 34 | 0 | 2 KND (5,9%) | 27KND (79,4%) | 5 KND (14,7%) |

7. Conclusion

This ratio of marks, obtained in this area in 2015 study, in general, is not peculiar for studies of the past years, in which the kindergartens demonstrated higher results.

Among the preschool educational institutions with a prevailing ethnocultural component in this area 6% of kindergartens are received a "good" mark, 75% received a "satisfactory" mark, and 19% received "unsatisfactory".

Thus, it is obvious that ranking is indeed serves as a mechanism to improve informatization in the area of preschool education. In assessing the preschool educational institutions with an ethnocultural component in total, it should be noted that trends in a educational situation discovered with this ranking are also typical for this group of kindergartens.

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